

REMARKS / DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-14 are pending in the application.

Applicant(s) respectfully request(s) the Examiner to acknowledge the claim for foreign priority and receipt of any certified copies of priority document(s) provided earlier or received from the International Bureau.

The Office action restricts the invention to one of the following groups of claims:

- I. Claims 1-3 and 9-12, drawn to an apparatus and method;
- II. Claims 4-7, drawn to an apparatus; and
- III. Claims 8, 13, and 14, drawn to a method.

In response, applicant(s) provisionally elect(s), with traverse, to prosecute claim(s) 1-3 and 9-12, identified as species I, along with any newly added claims drawn to the same species. Applicant(s) reserve(s) the right to prosecute the subject matter of the nonelected claim(s) in a divisional or other continuing application.

Applicants' traversal is based at least on the fact that the different "species," regardless of whether or not they should be considered separate inventions, are so closely related that the search and examination of the entire application can be made without serious burden.

MPEP § 803 - Restriction - When Proper

... If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to independent or distinct inventions.

Additionally, it is noted that rather than being a separate invention, claim 4 depends from independent claim 1 and is therefore the same invention as recited claim 1 except with additional recited features.

The claims in general are amended for one or more non-statutory reasons, for example to correct one or more informalities or obvious errors, remove figure label number(s), remove unnecessary limitations, and/or replace European claim

phraseology with U.S. claim language having the same meaning. The claims are not believed to be narrowed in scope. New dependent claims are added to at least partially restore the original range of claims that existed before multiple dependencies were removed in the preliminary amendment. No new matter is added.

Withdrawal of the restriction requirement and examination of the application on its merits are now respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

/Eric M. Bram/

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